



# The Robert Manning Technology College

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 120631  
**LEA** LINCOLNSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280859  
**Inspection dates** 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. Martin Cragg LI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Edinburgh Crescent
<b>School category</b>	Community		PE10 9DT
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01778422365
<b>Number on roll</b>	1172	<b>Fax number</b>	01778393879
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Roger Moore
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 December 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Geoffrey Greatwood

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	12 October 2005 - 13 October 2005	280859

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The Robert Manning Technology College is an 11 to 18 mixed secondary modern school which operates in a selective system of education. As a result, most higher attaining pupils attend the local grammar school. There are more boys than girls on roll. The school is of average size overall, although the sixth form is smaller than average. The school has been a specialist technology college since 1999 and has gained recognition at a national level. Currently 98% of the pupils are from white European backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low but the proportion with special educational needs and statements of special educational need is in line with the average. The majority of pupils come from the small market town of Bourne, although some are from nearby larger towns or small rural communities.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is providing consistently good education across all the major aspects of its work. This closely matches the school's own evaluation of its performance. The standards that pupils achieve are good overall. Pupils' progress is also good and in some cases outstanding. There is an excellent climate for learning and strong commitment to improvement. Senior staff set high expectations. Teaching is generally good. The tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress are very effective. Although some teachers use marking effectively to help pupils improve their work, there is too much inconsistency of approach between different subjects. Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well and attendance is in line with the average. The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all groups and individuals. There is good care and support for pupils to enable them to achieve well. Senior staff have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Areas for further improvement are accurately identified. Heads of department monitor and evaluate the performance of their subjects effectively but there needs to be a more co-ordinated approach across the school. The school has made very good improvement since its last inspection, especially in raising performance at GCSE and A level. The school's development plan is strongly focused on improving learning and raising standards. There is good capacity for further improvement, building on the good practice which already exists in the school. The school gives good value for money. The effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are good. Students speak with justifiable praise for the staff and the quality of opportunities offered. Standards have improved considerably in recent years and students achieve well. However, boys do not perform as well as they might on some vocational courses. The school is taking action to remedy this. Teaching in the sixth form is good and students are given good advice regarding university and beyond. They are also encouraged to think and learn for themselves. Students are successfully involved in helping their younger counterparts as peer mentors. The sixth form is well led and managed. The school has a good understanding of the strengths of the sixth form and what is needed to bring about further improvement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- ensure further improvement in the quality and style of teaching and learning by the effective sharing of existing good practice
- develop a consistent school approach to the marking and grading of pupils' work
- ensure that systems for monitoring and evaluating performance are implemented consistently by all middle managers.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The achievement of pupils is good. Pupils start at the school with attainment which is broadly in line with that found nationally, except that there are fewer pupils who achieve the higher Level 5 by the end of their primary education. Standards achieved

by pupils at Key Stage 3 are above average overall. Performance at GCSE has improved substantially since the last inspection and is significantly above average in most respects. The proportion of pupils achieving five or more grades A\*- C is high but when English and mathematics are included is just above the national average. The school has identified the performance of boys in English as an issue for action. Sixth form results have improved over the last three years and are now above national averages, although the school does not achieve as many higher grades as found nationally. Pupils at all levels of attainment on entry make very good progress by the end of Year 9, particularly in mathematics, where progress is outstanding. The progress made by most pupils in Years 10 and 11 is slower than in Years 7 to 9 overall. The progress of pupils in the sixth form is good. The school sets and achieves challenging targets for pupils based on an accurate but aspirational analysis of their potential.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. Pupils enjoy school and appreciate the variety of opportunities they are given to learn and make progress. Their attendance is satisfactory and effective strategies are in place to improve it further. Behaviour is almost always good and pupils display positive attitudes to learning. The school does not fulfil the statutory requirements regarding a daily act of collective worship or offer pupils sufficient opportunity for spiritual reflection. However, pupils' social, moral and cultural education is good. They demonstrate their awareness and understanding of the needs of others and transfer these feelings into actions as shown in the raising of funds for disaster relief. Pupils are proud of the school council but want the agenda to reflect important suggestions which they believe will make their school even better. The school is making good efforts to promote healthy lifestyles. One aspect of this is the availability of healthy eating options and drinking water in lessons. Also pupils are encouraged to stay safe. Pupils take opportunities to assist in school and community events. A well planned unit in personal, social and health education gives pupils knowledge, understanding and skills that they will be able to use in their working life. This is an example of the broad role the school strives to play in equipping pupils for future employment.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Inspectors' judgement of teaching closely matches the conclusions reached by the school leadership team in their own monitoring of lessons. In the best lessons, brisk pace and challenge engage the pupils' interest and enable them to make good progress. Teachers have efficient routines and high expectations of pupils. Planning is good and lessons often have a variety of activities and a lively style. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They use skilful questioning that encourages all pupils to think and be involved. In the satisfactory

lessons, there is less challenge, pupils are not always actively involved and therefore make less progress. Learning is very strongly at the heart of the school development plan. There has been effective training in understanding the different ways in which pupils learn and using varied approaches to teaching. This training has been influential in many lessons. The most able pupils are extended through enrichment activities such as the Challenge Day. The school's assessment policy and practice are extremely thorough. Assessment information is used very effectively to monitor pupils' progress and identify underperformance. Pupils, parents and carers receive good feedback on pupil progress, notably through the Progress Review Days and termly reports. The quality of marking varies too much and there is also variation in the grading used in different subjects.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of the curriculum across Years 7 to 11 and in the sixth form is good. It promotes achievement well and meets statutory requirements. This is an improvement since the last inspection. An excellent feature of the curriculum is the provision of four alternative pathways for pupils in Years 10 and 11. The pathways are carefully constructed to meet the needs of all groups of pupils. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress and prepares them well for their future economic well-being. Provision of information and communication technology (ICT) is good across all year groups and in the sixth form. In Years 10 and 11 every pupil can follow an externally accredited course in ICT. Good provision is made for the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The school provides a well constructed personal, social and health education course that contributes successfully to pupils' understanding of responsible citizenship. Pupils with learning and other difficulties have good access to the curriculum and the choices within it. The school offers a very good range of enrichment activities. Many pupils take part in the wide range of sporting activities and the variety of other clubs and societies. The school's technology specialist status has created additional opportunities for pupils to increase their technological skills and understanding. Good links with a variety of local businesses support this and all pupils in Year 11 undertake work experience.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Health and safety procedures are clear and fully in place and all staff know and understand the arrangements for child protection. All other steps to ensure the safety of pupils have been implemented. Staff work effectively with external agencies to support any pupils who may be at risk. There is also effective communication between the school and parents. Progress Review Days inform parents of the levels their children are working at and help in setting targets. Parents therefore become partners in their children's learning. Teachers support pupils effectively in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are identified quickly and individual learning programmes are set up to enable them to achieve well. Teaching assistants

generally offer the type and level of support necessary but their deployment and organisation could be improved. The Student Referral Officer and learning mentor help a number of pupils to make quicker progress and develop more positive attitudes to learning. Outstanding teamwork by heads of year, heads of school and department heads ensures that all pupils receive the right type of help to become confident learners and achieve well. More able pupils are supported in their learning by enrichment activities which challenge them. There is effective careers advice and planning for the future.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and senior staff establish an excellent climate for learning and set high expectations. The process of review and planning for development is precise and strongly focused on improving learning and raising standards. The school knows its strengths and identifies the right areas for improvement. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school, particularly the quality of teaching and learning, are well established amongst senior staff. Monitoring and evaluation by middle managers are good in relation to pupil progress and tracking but are less well developed for the quality of teaching. The school's self-evaluation is accurate overall. The regular 'ethos survey' takes account of the views of pupils, parents, governors and staff and provides good information for planning. The school recognises and caters for the full range of pupils' needs. There are good links with local schools, colleges, businesses and the community. Teachers and other staff are well qualified and suitably deployed. Resources are managed well in difficult circumstances and value for money is good. Governance of the school is good. There is a clear focus on the main priorities of learning and standards and governors provide challenge for further improvement. Senior staff roles are clearly defined and well matched to their expertise. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the standards achieved and progress made by pupils. There is good capacity for further improvement. The leadership of the school is highly regarded by parents.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, your school was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. However, first, I would like to thank you all, on behalf of the inspection team, for your politeness and co-operation during our visit. We greatly appreciated your comments and opinions and were very impressed with your enthusiasm and attitude to school. The inspection found that your school was consistently good. You are encouraged to learn and aim for high targets. Results of tests in Year 9 and exams in Year 11 and the sixth form are almost always above the national average. You make very good progress from when you join the school. You generally behave well in lessons and around school. There is a friendly and positive atmosphere between you and your teachers. Teachers review your progress carefully and give you support to improve when necessary. The school provides a good range of courses which give you choices to suit your interests. The advice you get on making choices and on careers is also good. There is a wide range of activities for you to be involved in and many of you enjoy these. You have good opportunities to find out about the world of work. There are some aspects of the school's work that need to improve. Some of you feel that the College Council agenda could reflect your views more. We feel that your teachers can help you to learn even better if they share the best ideas and approaches used now. You responded very well in lessons where you were encouraged to think for yourselves and to investigate ideas. Subjects use different grades and ways of commenting on your work and we feel that there should be a common school approach to help you understand more easily. We also think that the school needs to make sure that it reviews your progress consistently in all subjects. We are confident that your school can continue to improve. We wish you well in the future.